



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 161

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2015

No. 133

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

God of grace and love, You guard our lives with Your peace. Help us to not attempt to build a relationship with You on the basis of our merit and goodness.

Give our lawmakers the wisdom to make Your grace the foundation for their living. May Your righteousness that comes from faith energize them to dare more boldly, attempting to accomplish great things for Your glory. Lord, grant that their childlike trust in You will free them to serve others, inspired by Your love.

Oh God, You are our help and hope. Thank You for Your gifts of liberty and grace, unconditional love, and generous mercy.

We pray in Your marvelous Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The Democratic leader is recognized.

NUCLEAR AGREEMENT WITH IRAN AND GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. REID. Mr. President, in one week Congress will host one of the world's great faith leaders, His Holiness Pope

Francis. Every Member of Congress is looking forward to the Pope's historic address.

Since beginning his papacy, Pope Francis has been admired for his humility and honesty. Rather than shirk responsibility from important and controversial global challenges, he has confronted them. While he and I don't agree on everything, his statements on climate change, immigration reform, and income inequality have challenged world leaders, and that is an understatement.

Yesterday His Holiness and the Vatican stated their support for the nuclear agreement with Iran. A spokesperson for His Holiness told the International Atomic Energy Agency that this agreement "will be a definitive step toward greater stability and security in the region." That is certainly the truth.

Supporting the nuclear agreement between the permanent five members of the U.N. Security Council, Germany, and Iran is the best way to ensure that Iran does not get a nuclear weapon. That is what the agreement is all about. That is why last week the Senate clearly stated the agreement will stand. No matter how you talk about all these other things, the agreement is to stop Iran from getting a nuclear weapon. That is what it is all about.

Last night the Senate again rejected the Republican attempt to derail the nuclear agreement. Now for the second time, the Republican leader is refusing to accept the reality that, in fact, it is going to go forward. He is doubling down and committing the Senate to vote on other issues.

We have seen this strategy before. It never works, whether it was with homeland security, ObamaCare or all the other issues. All it does is waste time that we cannot afford.

When the Republican leader tried this approach on homeland security, remember what JOHN MCCAIN, the Senator from Arizona, said: It was the "definition of insanity." What he was

talking about was what Albert Einstein said, that if you keep doing the same thing over and over, knowing you will get the same result, it is insanity.

Today a news report described the Republican leader's strategy as "the second kick of a mule," and said "it's not working."

It is unbelievable what the Republican leader is trying to do. We have 7 working days before a shutdown of the government. Why? Because we won't have any money. The Senate will take no votes today. If the Republican leader has his way, all the Senate will do this week is take yet another failed vote on Iran. At this rate the Senate will end this week with nothing to show for our time but two failed votes—nothing dealing with the most important issue facing this country, and that is, how to fund the government.

We have seen Republicans manufacture crises before. This one truly is embarrassing. The government runs out of money in a matter of days. Republicans have no plans to avoid a shutdown, and we have almost twoscore of Republicans in the House who said they will vote for nothing unless it defunds women's health care. We have a number of Senators saying if there is nothing in this to stop the funding of Planned Parenthood, they will vote against it.

The government runs out of money in just a few days. To do nothing, with no plans to avoid a shutdown, when we are standing around waiting for something to be done on the budget is unwise and wrong, and it is an insult to the American people.

Last Thursday's vote is not going to change. Last night's vote will not change. The Republicans lost those votes. What are their future plans? They will not prevent President Obama and his administration from implementing the Iran agreement.

There is precious little time left before a government shutdown. It is time

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper.

S6661